FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

'For a world united in prayer''

Volume XXVIII, Number 5, October 1977

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Founded by Carl Allison Evans (1880 - 1956)

OUR PURPOSE: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of Fellowship among mankind.

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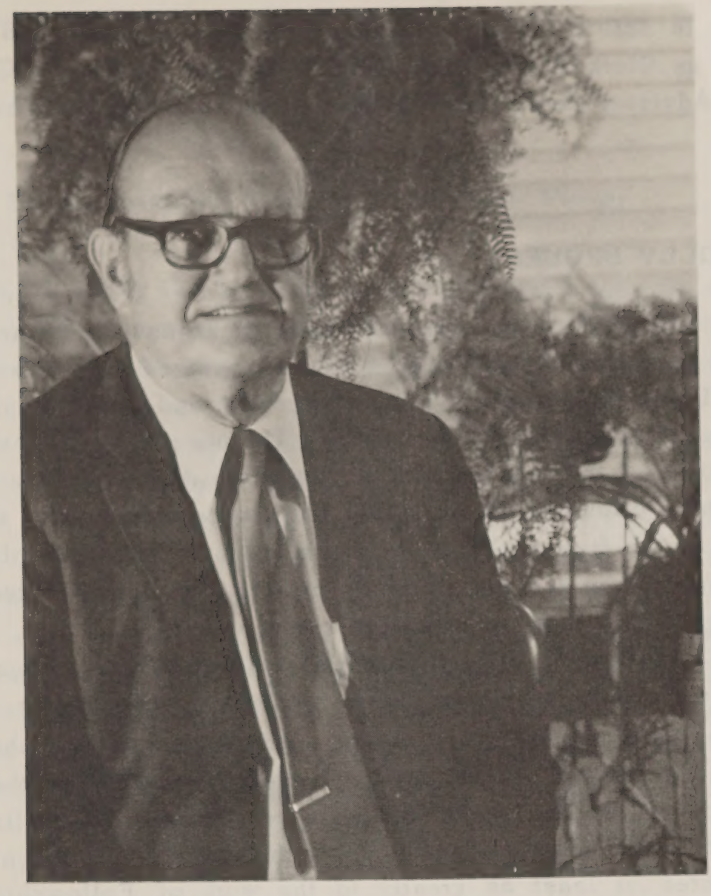
We are publishing the following memento on the occasion of Kathryn G. Brown's retirement as Executive Secretary of Fellowship in Prayer—the post she has more than filled for the twenty-one years since the death of the Fellowship's founder.

MISS BROWN

WITH HINDSIGHT it is not difficult to see that Kathryn Brown was led to the leadership of Fellowship in Prayer. Born of an old Dutch Reformed family in Rockland County, New York, she was educated to be a legal secretary. She soon turned her extraordinary energies to the Rockland County Council of Religious

Education, then to the Boy Scout Foundation of Greater New York, and eventually to the United Board for Christian Colleges in China. She spent thirteen years with the United Board, associated with Carl Allison Evans, successful businessman and missionary to the Philippines who was then Acting Executive Secretary. When Mr Evans retired in 1949, the idea for the Fellowship was already taking shape in his mind. He invited Miss Brown to work with him, which she agreed to do, and together they put in considerable time and effort in preparation for the founding of the Fellowship in December of that year. Following Mr Evans's death in 1956, she finally bowed to the request of the Board of Trustees and assumed his post. Through years that were often ones of scrimping hardship her devotion and capacity for work kept the Fellowship going. "It's a twenty-four-hour-a-day job," she says cheerfully. It is especially gratifying to her that, thanks to the faithful remembrance of Mr and Mrs Eli Lilly and other friends, she is able to turn the Fellowship over to the future in the healthiest state it has ever been. She is giving up the day-by-day routine, but hardly her concern for the furtherance of the work. From her new home in New Jersey she will go on serving the Fellowship as Editorial Consultant. She will also remain Secretary of the Corporation.Thus her enormous experience will continue to be available to the Fellowship just as her example will be to those who will be carrying on her job. We want to express our gratitude for and appreciation of all Miss Brown has done as well as our affectionate best wishes to her for the future.

On the retirement of Kathryn G. Brown on August 1, 1977, the Board of Trustees appointed Herrymon Maurer, of Princeton, New Jersey, as Executive Secretary of Fellowship in Prayer.



HERRYMON MAURER

BORN in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, Herrymon Maurer is a graduate of Dartmouth College and the University of Pittsburgh. He has taught English at the University of Nanking in China, served on the Board of Editors of *Fortune*, directed Quaker publications, worked as a management-consultant, contributed to *Fortune*, *Commentary*, and other publications, including *FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER* (April and June of 1973), and written ten books—principally about business, East Asia, and religion. We are pleased to print a recent article of his on the following pages. Herrymon

Maurer is active in the Religious Society of Friends. He has served as Clerk of Princeton Monthly Meeting and is now Clerk of the Advisory Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

THE LILLY BEQUEST

SUMS sufficiently substantial to permit an expansion in the activities of Fellowship in Prayer have been granted under the will of Eli Lilly, industrialist, Indiana historian, and philanthropist, who died January 24 at the age of 91. The bequest is a specific recognition of the interest of his wife, Ruth Allison Lilly, who gave the Fellowship incalculable spiritual and financial support from the first years of its existence until the time of her death in 1973 at the age of 81. A memorial article appeared in the August 1973 issue of this publication.

Called by Mr Lilly a memorial to his wife, the bequest —like many other provisions of his will—is a testimony to the deep mutuality of the life and concerns of both Lillys, whose tenderness to one another led to tenderness to one another's benefactions. So remarkable indeed were the personal qualities that led to the benefactions that over the years the former have contributed at least as greatly to the work of Fellowship in Prayer as have the latter.

Mrs Lilly combined depth and wisdom of insight with marked sweetness of character. Mr Lilly was gentle, generous, and genuinely modest. The creator of a large pharmaceutical house and of a large but little-publicized charitable foundation, he was seen by those about him as a very special man who saw nothing special about himself. He was, in fact, one of that unusual group of businessmen who act on the conviction that the people who associate together are more important than the business they do and even the products they produce. This was Mrs Lilly's conviction as well. Combined with faith in the Divine and in the values that spring from prayer, it made both their lives testimonies that stand in that which is eternal over against the confusion of today's often-valueless times.

WHAT DOES GOD HEAR?

Herrymon Maurer

Part I: The Everyday Practice of Surrender Prayer

HOW WE PRAY and how God listens depends, I suspect, on how we react to two of the principal spiritual cataclysms of this century: the threat of atomic bombs and the extermination of six million Jews. The great majority of those Hitler killed were people of small Central European towns, the possessors of no more than small means and small occupations. Steadfast men, women, and children, they gave repeated utterance to great and even ecstatic prayers. They strove to turn to God; they aimed to sanctify each aspect of their simple lives; and their particular prayer for the future was the coming of the Messiah. Instead came Hitler. And yet these innocents, by the hundreds of thousands, glorified God in the very cattlecars that carried them to death, praying, singing, and even performing their religious dances. ("Though He slay me, yet shall I love Him.")

Meanwhile, the slaughter of other innocents in Russia continued on a large scale, and in China similar slaughter began. And then, in the midst of this unbelievable violence, there suddenly were let loose new weapons of unbelievable destructiveness, the various atomic weapons of ever-increasing force that made a literal and factual possibility of the end of the world: not according to the vision of the early prophets(" I shall destroy all things from off the earth"), but according to the lack of vision of man generally, who even now cannot keep these weapons from proliferating and threatening the existence of all life upon the planet, whether the weapons are used purposely, accidentally, or psychotically.

From the beginning of this proliferation, still and small voices have been raised against the gigantic force of atomic weapons. In interesting unanimity, these voices have insisted that it was not by making war or making leagues that the force

could be neutralized, but only by a recrudescence of true religion accompanied by widespread prayer. Prominent among these voices was that of Carl Allison Evans, founder of Fellowship in Prayer, who very literally saw prayer as the only alternative to the twin catastrophes of totalitarianism and atomic warfare. His call —to men and women of all faiths— was to a trust in the power of Truth and to a deep conviction of the experienced reality of God. Through his own inward experience of prayer, he saw it not alone as a personal act but also as an overwhelming social necessity.

Seeing the power of prayer as greater than the outward powers of this world, he saw the possibility of a world united in prayer, prayer that goes beyond differences in sect, differences in dogma, and differences in belief to unite mankind. This vision he embodied in Fellowship in Prayer, and it has been kept alive since his death in 1956 by Kathryn G. Brown and by active members of the Fellowship.

The threat of cataclysmic violence is probably greater today than it was when the Fellowship was founded, partly because the general public has of late thought little about totalitarianism and has lived with the atomic threat long enough for it to seem relatively remote, but largely because of the weakness with which too many of us pray. Moreover, there has been a marked increase in types of violence that are less catastrophic than bombs but more pervasive, in particular the violence in the streets and in our own hearts, in the form of fears, tensions, rages, guilts, addictions, depressions, and alienations, all admixed with distressed sensations of inadequacy and supremacy.

Can prayer overcome violence of these intense and widespread sorts? If God is not deaf to prayer, why does He not heed the cries of His children for deliverance from violence? Does God hear at all? Was He of any use to the Jews who glorified Him and were exterminated, He who promised to be of use to the ends of the earth, who had pledged to give when asked, and to listen when called upon, the God whose promises are tried and true, who teaches any who go astray, teaching even

during the night, the God who is a refuge for us, the God from whose love nothing can ever separate us?

Prayer itself is a deliverance

Prayer is indeed the answer to bombs, to violence in the streets, to the confusion of our own beings. But God does not deliver us out of hand from the catastrophes from which He intends us to find the deliverance provided by prayer. The profound effect of prayer in the outward world of history comes from the new and powerful way of life of those men and women who have been touched through prayer's true wisdom, by the power of the Spirit of Truth.

But what about specific and sickening acts of violence? Was God deaf to the prayers of the men and women and children who were annihilated by Hitler? The unthinkable has been expressed in the imaginings of some people that God permitted Hitler because He wanted to punish the Jews for the transgression of being Jews, but such grotesque self-righteousness is antithetical to everything prayer teaches us of God. When we pray truly, we are a part of a humanity united, inwardly at least, by one another's pain; and the trials and sufferings of the Jews or of any oppressed and violated people are our own sufferings and our trials, and no outward differences of any sort can separate us from them.

How then could God have let Hitler happen? This question merely rephrases the eternal question that rises in us whenever there is violence or injustice or sickness or death, whether these take place on a massive or personal scale. Our inward experience of God, the very God to whom we pray, is of a God of love; and we do not know how suffering comes into His world, except that it is, like all things else, His creation. Invariably are we led to relieve suffering and to work against violence; and invariably are we conscious, in the deepest moments of suffering in our lives, of the presence of the One by whom we are created and by whom we are loved. His creation is such that there is suffering in it and at the same time there is love for

the sufferer. Is it not written: "He loveth whom He chasteneth"?

At this point, not alone the answers we seek but the very questions we ask go beyond the limits of our comprehension, and we are confronted by the awesome and inexplicable wonder of the Truth which is God. And humbly we begin to sense that God appears not to intervene in His physical creation: not to call up or call off earthquakes, plagues, wars, and commotions, and certainly not to direct them personally against this or that group of men and women or against this or that individual person. God's ways are not our ways, and our plans are not His plans. We are given to know His presence but not His purposes, let alone His nature (if it is conceivable that He have such a thing). Is He not the Eternal, the Everpresent, the Nameless, the Unknown, the Undefined? God is indeed far greater than He appears to any of us, but since the time of the later prophets of Israel men and women have sensed that His intervention is in the realm of the spirit, that it is in that realm that prayers are answered; and also that it is in that realm that prayers are to be asked.

But how can we finite human beings ask the Infinite to intervene effectively and yet spiritually in matters so unavoidably physical as massacres and annihilations? If enough of us had prayed hard enough, would God have prevented Hitler or the atom bomb? Certainly not: we are led by great teachers of all faiths to know that the effect of God's spiritual intervention is to direct us to labor within the material realm of this world for an end of oppression and violence. We are His hands.

Our hearts are His because we know His healing presence, but if our hands are not His in this labor, it is clear that He will intervene no further for us. The agonizing death of six million Jews has settled this question once and for all. If God did not intervene physically for them against Hitler, He will not intervene physically for us against, say, the atom bomb. Nor will He intervene spiritually, so that our hands are motivated by our hearts, unless we let Him, unless, indeed, we ask Him. He does not lead us to the Truth by force or manipulation; He does not

handle us like puppets. He permits us, indeed, to make our own mistakes. But it is the testimony of thousands of generations of men and women that if we listen, He will lead.

The nature of this leading is the nature of prayer. In contrast to the dogmas and credos of reason, prayer is strictly our *experience* of religion. The Truth revealed by it is not doctrine or belief, but the living center of testimony and action. Not only does spiritual religion arise out of prayer, both it and prayer itself also arise out of the whole experience of living, including the conscious, unconscious, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and physical aspects of our beings. We come to sense something of Truth by communicating with it on all levels; we come to sense particularly Truth's certainty and reality. People throughout the world often believe differently, but very much more often they pray alike.

Particularly they pray, "Thy will be done." In so praying, they are united in an experience that brings inward conviction of spiritual reality beyond the realm of conscious reason, and that leads to a ready acceptance of what is going on, combined with a willingness to change it as indicated by divine summoning. In the absence of inward conviction, however, reason often connects the will of God with what happens, and not with what should happen, and constructs theological systems in which appear social prejudices and an acceptance as good of such immoralities as violence, oppression, and greed, which are falsely identified with the will of God manifested by supposed intervention in the world around us.

In the face of the violence around us and within us—the two types are linked—we can only experiment with prayer, trusting that we may learn something of it as a spiritual weapon and as a spiritual defense. We are then likely to learn that small acts of love and trust may in God's time have greater meaning than the disasters that called them forth. The fact of Jews dancing on their way to death is more important spiritually than the horrors they physically faced, and the deeply-moved worldwide prayers of small groups of men and women challenging worldwide

violence are greater spiritual prime-movers than all the atom bombs. Clearly we must learn prayer that we may use it right and may, in turn, by it be used.

"Thine own will is deceit"

But first we must unlearn old habits that can serve as obstacles between us and Truth, namely egocentric prayer and complicated prayer. However much such prayers may vary in wording, they are usually the same in theme: namely, "My will be done." And, typically, they are not so much addressed to God as they are to a fetish, a self-image misidentified as God. God obviously does not hear. God is not even addressed. Indeed, there is not so much prayer as there is magic, which is, in essence, an attempt to manipulate God into doing one's own will. The picture of a man on his knees praying to himself is at best ludicrous.

A man in this position relates everything that happens to himself. What other people feel or think is unimportant to him unless they are thinking about him, as he imagines they frequently do, for he is convinced that he is outstanding and special. Indeed he will go to extreme lengths to convince himself that he is either greatly above or greatly below someone else—inferiority serves him as well as superiority—when all the time, in the eyes of Truth, he is exactly the same height. He imagines a different altitude because, as the center of the universe, he believes it is up to him to keep the universe in order.

Of the enormity of this egocentrism, we are generally unaware. A basic human problem, it has also been a special and intense problem of Western civilization throughout the past six centuries, and even now when ego roles and rules are beginning to be abandoned, it is being crudely universalized among nations and peoples who have not heretofore been a part of Western culture such as the Japanese abroad or the poor at home who are only now starting to live by the standards of egocentrism. It is also being simplified into me-first terms. The absurdity of considering oneself the center of the universe is

not understood when one has been exposed to such a notion from infancy and has observed it from a time prior to memory. Visions of success, independence, self-reliance, and splendid aloneness swim so early in the head that they seem to be immutable rules of human conduct. They are very seldom seen in terms of their consequences, which include compulsions, addictions, and neuroses with all their attendant fears, worries, guilts, depressions, rages, and alienations.

These painful consequences of the egocentrism that cuts man off from man cut him off from God and from the reality of God's creation. If he cannot worship God, he is forced to worship himself. If he can only deny the direction of God, he must try to direct things himself. In this case, his subjective desires and motivations become so much the measure of all things that he cannot look at things as they are without unconsciously altering them to suit himself. His own will is indeed deceit. His very neuroses and addictions and compulsions are interposed between him and reality like a filter that removes whatever is too much for his egocentrism, making it possible for him to coexist with reality, but making it impossible to come to factual terms with it. For all the agony of his fears and rages and depressions and guilts, he does not want to give them up (giving them up, if he wants, is easy) but wants only to give up the accompanying pain. But giving that up is impossible: he is caught in the pursuit of unreality, and his pain and aloneness can only increase.

In the course of such a pursuit, some people believe they are pursuing Truth when they are only stirring up emotionalism: not true religious excitement, but rather adrenalism, nervous stimulation, and pseudo-sexual excitement of the sort aroused by television. Others confuse Truth with dourness, rigidity, narrow scrupulosity, and self-righteousness, any and all of which are put forward as acts of faith and adjuncts to prayer.

Let it not be thought that the way of Truth is strong among those who profess belief, and that the way of deceit is wrong among those who profess unbelief. The deceit of self-will is equally strong with both. In the life of prayer, Truth and deceit

result not from intellectual beliefs or the absence of them, but from the working of all aspects of a human being: body and spirit, emotions, dreams, and, finally, reason. Deceit needs to be purged from all of these aspects, not simply from reason alone.

Egocentrism is essentially a cultural choice, made for us by distant ancestors and repeated for us by ancestors more immediate. But the choice is always ours. It is a certainty that God will get rid of self for us—will if He is asked more than halfheartedly. Nothing requires us to live at the mercy of our unconscious. Indeed, the goodness of God is shown in His calling us to come forth from emotional and spiritual slavery. And yet, precisely at a time when people are becoming more and more sick of self-will, self-will is being propagandized in dozens of new therapies, which typically promise the alleviation of ego-pains through the practice of new forms of egocentrism, such as self-assertiveness, self-expression, self-analysis, encounter, sensitivity, and consciousness-raising. A common aim of such therapies is finding oneself, and in the pursuit of it the patient is supposed to let his emotions all hang out, notably his anger, the emission of which—in quantum-like spurts —is held to be essential to self-realization.

All this is a great deal of self-centered nonsense—we need not to find ourselves but to find God and our neighbor—but it is nonsense so pervasive that it is wise to recall that in many times and places and in all the higher religions, he who loses his life shall save it, while he who saves his life shall lose it: an observation that is not so much a moral rule as a psychological fact. Let me *not* find myself. Let me be willing to be found.

For, alongside the egocentrism of our cultural tradition, there is a contrary tradition of turning to God and of seeking not oneself but one's neighbor. For all the compulsiveness of our addiction to self, it is relatively easy to be delivered once one is genuinely willing. Then I need not find myself, and I become willing for God to find me. And then I become ready to pray.

Keep prayer simple

It is said that whoever can talk can pray and that whoever talks least prays best. Great prayers are simple: witness the cries of the Psalms, the brief and direct petitions in the Gospels. Such prayers are universal, understandable by persons of all conditions. There is always, however, the temptation to make prayers complex, to have recourse to high and intricate language, to call into use flattery and flattering phrases, and even to launch into homilies on current issues, as in one prayer that started: "Oh, Lord, as Thou has doubtless seen in this morning's *Times*. . . ." Of somewhat the same needless complexity are cogitation prayers, wherein God is given a grounding in theology and told what He is. It is important to take such lapses humorously in order not to take them seriously. We shall never pray entirely right, and nothing can get more in the way of right prayer than guilt.

Entirely different in complexity is mystical prayer, practiced at one time or another within all the major religions. In such prayer, one climbs a spiritual ladder, progressing from one rung to another and thus passing from simple petitionary prayer through praise and adoration to contemplation, speculation, and union with the Godhead. Involved is a technique of prayer that has to be learned not only by praying but also by studying about praying. It requires ability to study; it is usually not undertaken by children and illiterates. It is not, however, restrictive in aim, which is to move inwardly toward the immediate presence of God outside the confinements of time, space, and other ordinary limitations of daily life.

The question is not whether prayer of the mystical sort is possible or valid—validity and possibility appear to be established beyond doubt and beyond words—but whether in its current form it is appropriate: appropriate at a time of inward confusions and outward disorders, a time when God's creation and the human beings in it are under threat of catastrophe. Actually, not a few men and women of prayer who have ventured into the

realm beyond time and place have declined to stay in it. Martin Buber reports that during a time in his life when "illumination, ecstasy, and rapture held," he failed to be present in spirit when he was visited by a young man desperate to find meaning in his life. The young man subsequently died, and Buber gave up "the religious," or else, he said, it gave him up. "I possess nothing," he later wrote, "but the everyday out of which I am never taken."

For the mystical, particularly in many of its current forms, departs from the everyday, the world in which love for God is inseparable from love for actual men, women, and children, in which the power of Truth calls us out of a confusion of emotion and spirit and lifts us up to the Eternal. Creation is not to be saved by the renunciation of it. It may well be that God now calls upon us to let Him be active through us in the redemption of our threatened corner of His creation.

Let prayer be simple! Prayer that arises out of the deep simplicity of Truth is invariably linked with everyday matters, not with our opinions, ideas, emotions, and cogitations about our role in the universe. True prayer puts us in touch with what is going on, and our closeness to the Creator becomes the greater through awareness of His creation. Let there be awe rather than adoration, acceptance rather than speculation, obedience rather than union, and surrender rather than rapture.

Prayer is first of all surrender

Prayer is a precious habitation, but, before we pray, we must know that it is God's habitation not ours; otherwise, we will never enter it and may even imagine we have a key to it when we are still out in the cold. If prayer is to be anything other than worship of self and of worldliness, there must be surrender, so that we see God and not ourselves as the center of the universe. This fact cannot be repeated too often. The surrender can hardly be total in fact, but it must be total in intention. It requires a turning to God and a turning over of one's own self, one's own will, one's entire being, including all problems, all frustrations, all

contentions inward and outward, and all our ills. It also means a turning over and a throwing away of our insistence that things turn out the way we egocentrically want. It means a renunciation of self-seeking prayers.

There is a losing of self that, before it happens, seems to involve the very annihilation of our being, for we think we are made up of nothing more than self-centered wants and confusions. There can indeed be no lasting strength of spirit without the experience of complete defeat. But what follows defeat is not inward death but inward liberation, a new attitude toward life, a new way of life, and a new surge of joy. He who loses his life does save it.

Such surrender involves six, at least, necessary steps:

1) Surrender must include, first of all, a giving up of our desire to play God. To this end we pray constantly to be delivered from self-will. Whenever we are tempted to impose our will, we pray to be teachable rather than to teach. We pray to give up whatever it is that separates us from the Truth which is God, including our worldly ideas of failure and success.

2) Surrender must be repeated. It is no-once-in-a-lifetime event. So attached are we to our false selves that, once we have given them up, we are all too ready to start taking them back. There is no instantaneous arrival at perfection; there is growth, and growth is an endless series of repeated daily or more-often-than-daily surrenders.

3) Surrender must be specific. Our egocentric willfulness is expressed in particular and distinct patterns of mind and emotion, including guilts, worries, evasions, fears, sulks, depressions, grandiosities, shames, rages, isolations, and like deceits. For a start, it is well to give up self-will in general, but progress in deliverance from it requires willingness to give up the psychological and even physical habits through which it has long expressed itself. Surrendering our faults to God is the only certain way of getting rid of them. The way of will-power and the way of guilt, despite their wide social approval, are no more than ways of perpetuating our faults.

4) Surrender must include what is popularly called low ego as well as what is called high ego. Riddance is sought of what centers self on self, and self centers on self powerfully through convictions of being the lowest of the low, even more powerfully than through convictions of being the highest of the high. Misery, guilt, and unworthiness separate us as readily from God as their opposites. Guilt, in particular, compells repetition of precisely those errors for which one feels guilty. Too readily we tell tales of sins that God is not allowed to forgive.

5) Surrender must be to the God of reality. Our fears, depressions, frustrations, agitations, and confusions have not only the consequence of making us miserable but also the function of separating us from reality and of making the separation tolerable. As a consequence, we want to give up our miseries through devious psychological dodges, but we do not want to get rid of the source of these miseries, which is simply our alienation from things as they are.

6) Surrender must be made not only to God, but also to other human beings. Only too easily can I delude myself that I have surrendered myself or specific aspects of myself to God and use this delusion to reinforce my separation from Him. He is not physically present to correct my error. But my neighbor, my fellow man, is present, and I must find some means—prayer-groups or therapy groups, for instance—to surrender to him also, not simply because he is present to correct me, but also because he is present for me to love. The love of God, says an eighteenth century Jewish teacher, begins with the love of man. If we are unable to surrender to man, we are unlikely to surrender to God.

(Part II of this article, which will appear in the December issue, will concentrate on five particular ways of simple prayer that offer deliverance from inward confusions and outward violence.)

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS by Reuben L. Musey

THE WORLD'S OLDEST RELIGION

HINDUISM—which accepts a universal soul of which other souls are manifestations—is the world's oldest religion. History tells us it did not have a founder. Its roots go back to the beginnings of the human race. This distinction it shares with all animistic belief—the belief that everything in nature has a soul, or spiritual side. Hinduism also possesses the oldest of religious books: the Vedas, the holy books combining hymns and rituals.

The chief characteristics of Hinduism are its versatility and tolerance. Hinduism has no creed to which its adherents must subscribe. It has holy scriptures, but no doctrine of verbal inspiration or infallibility for them. The believer may take them or leave them or may take whatever he likes from other writings, even from other religions, without giving up his Hindu faith or even having a bad conscience regarding it.

The main idea of Hindusim basically is monism—belief that there is only one fundamental principle in the universe. This is the all-permeating world-soul or god called Brahma. Brahma is the creator, of whom all other souls are only a part or a manifestation. Brahma is eternal, the only true reality. It is the aim and the distinction of all souls eventually to return to perfect union with him.

According to Hinduism, the material world is a playful creation of Brahma's. The material world is unreal, an illusion, which can and will be dissolved again by Brahma — who, in fact, does dissolve his creation every four billion years and then begins over again in an endless cycle.

Once an individual soul is enmeshed in the material world, the road back to Brahma is a long and arduous one. It leads through many rebirths. In the material incarnations of the individual soul there is a direction either upwards toward the final goal of union with Brahma or downwards to lower forms of existence, leading farther away from the goal and thus prolonging the number of necessary incarnations and the time of trial.

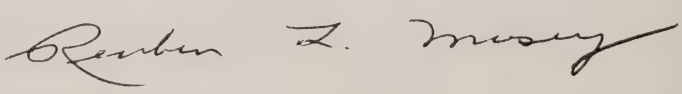
The factor determining the direction of the individual soul and the number of incarnations that are necessary is the Karma—the force generated by the sum of the individual's good and evil deeds. These deeds irrevocably influence his future lives, until all evil and misdeeds have been worked off and he is ready to be reunited with Brahma, never to return to earth.

The Indian caste-system—defined by rules of descent, occupation, behaviour, or ritual—is closely related to the doctrine of Karma. The caste-system assigns each individual to the caste of his birth, to the social position which he cannot leave in his present lifetime. Only if his Karma for this life is good, can he hope to advance to a higher caste in his next life—until finally from the highest caste of all—the Brahman—he has a chance to reach the goal: the end of his incarnations.

At the top of the caste system are the Brahmans: priests and intellectuals, scholars, teachers, and philosophers. Next come the Kshatrivas, who consist of the nobles and warriors and provide government and defense for the country. The Vausyas include all Aryan common people who produce and distribute food and other necessities of life, such as merchants, peasants, and so forth. They are followed by the Sudras—the laborers and servants for the higher groups. Below them are the Pariahs, the outcaste or casteless group, the untouchables, now abolished by government order.

The Vedas, which originated between 1500 and 800 B.C., have been called 'the Old Testament of Hinduism,' and the Upanishads, the next collection of sacred texts, its 'New Testament.' The Upanishads contain the philosophical concepts of Hinduism, its teachings about the universe, Karma, and reincarnation being presented in dialogues between teacher and pupil.

Salvation in the sense of overcoming one's evil Karma and progressing toward the ultimate goal of final reunion with God is the chief concern of Hinduism. One way of salvation which gives true meaning is the way of knowledge—that is, the knowledge of the true nature of self and God and the universe.



MIDST THE PINES

Neil C. Fitzgerald

A splinter of sun
penetrates the scented boughs,
a kinglet calls to wild flowers,
steps crunch a needle carpet
all else is still —
God listens. . . .
Soul, sing of His grandeur,
praise the beauty light,
raise this full cup
to the lips of consciousness
and let this personal intimacy
find wings in all prayer. . . .

SUMMER AND FALL

Leonard Opalov

A tree in summer —
a blossoming fantasy,
a tree in fall —
a faded reminder,
sort of an apparition,
staring upon us
gloomily.

AWAKENING IN A SUN-DRENCHED GARDEN

Marjorie Sharp Carter

A quiet peace enfolds me
In silent ecstasy . . .
Then suddenly Eternity opens
And I hear the birdling's thoughts . .
The turtles speak,
And the little animals' fear cries silently.

Angels come down
And bless us with loving healing.
My neighbors' thoughts flow into me

And I pour out the light
Of understanding.

All peoples and Nature blend,
And suddenly I know
That we are all One being —
Brothers and sisters in God's creation
Even to the lowly insect . . .
For Love unites us all in compassion,
And my heart is too big with tears
To even speak.

A LEAKY FAUCET

Patrick M. Ellingham

Drop after drop, they continue to fall
Exploding into each other
Expanding with the fusion of selves
To make some glorious new existence
Willing to plun ge deeper in their new form
Seeking always the total experience
Fearless and with complete faith
They are submerged in an ocean of salvation
Praying to be drawn into the clouds of their creation.

THE SHEEP

Faye Miller

The sheep are they whose heart still
longs
To hear the Shepherd's voice.
Deep down inside is the desire
To make His will their choice.

Though they may err, the world never
Completely fully blinds them
To the light of love which finally
shines
Into their hearts and finds them.

OF MOUNTAIN ROOTS AND MOUNTAIN PEOPLE

Emily Sargent Councilman

IN BRIGHT SUNLIGHT I drove past the old house—*Still there*, I thought—all the way up to Jump-Off Rock, which offers a panoramic view of the faroff Blue Ridge and Smokey Mountains.

At the top, under the blue dome of the sky, puffs of white clouds scudded past me. Other clouds floated almost ghostlike among the mountains. Nearer, the clear texture of smaller peaks and hollows displayed separate etchings of individual identities. I looked out upon a wilderness in miniature, punctuated with gardens, orchards, pastures, and buildings that looked small enough to be toys.

Not toys. Suddenly I realized the magnitude of the scene below me: those tiny houses were large enough to hold all the dreams, both nightmare and vision, of a strong people. The first settlers came to this wild country two hundred years ago to put down roots. They chose to tend and to nurture those roots, reaping their harvests of grain—and rock—in this growing-place open to the sky.

Beyond those miniature frame houses and hand-hewn log cabins, I envisioned all the pioneers of the spirit in this land growing from childhood to maturity, asking questions, discovering weakness and strength, experiencing God within and without. I began to reflect upon my own childhood here in the mountains.

I discovered the mountains the summer I was seven. My family had rented a vacation cottage two miles outside Hendersonville, North Carolina. Laurel Park was a new tourist development in the "Land of the Sky," which included the whole of Jump-Off Mountain, noted for its "fabulous views and unspoiled land." Most of the land was for sale except the holdings high on the ridges that belonged to the mountain people.

Descendants of English, German, and Scotch-Irish setlers, the mountain people were fiercely independent. They developed their pieces of land and, despite encroaching technolo-

gy, continued to live on what they could produce by farming. The mountain people stayed mostly to themselves and were rarely seen in town. Occasionally they traded their produce at Drake's Store for the few staples not grown or made on their own farms.

At the end of the summer, when most tourists returned to their homes, we stayed in Laurel Park and began to put down our roots, even though we were warned about the isolation and bitter cold of the winter months.

Something about that mountain country impelled my mother and father to make the transplant. They built a sprawling bungalow among the white pines and dogwoods on the first rise of the steep road to Jump-Off Rock. Past Jump-Off, the road continued to Jones Gap, Mt. Hebron, and other crests and hollows where the mountain people lived, each family separated by great stretches of dense underbrush and thick stands of timber.

I'm sure it was not easy for my parents to make the move. But I saw and heard their delight in the cool nights of summer, the fresh air, the pure water piped down from Crystal Spring. And I always will remember the Sunday afternoon drives we took in the Model T Ford.

On those memorable excursions, we explored not only the nearby mountain roads (when passable), but other roads farther away: to Chimney Rock, to Mt. Pisgah, and to Mt. Mitchell. For these trips we carefully prepared picnic lunches that always included newspaper-wrapped mason jars filled with Mama's caffein-free drip coffee liberally laced with sugar and milk. I felt grown-up when I was allowed to drink the still-warm liquid.

I, too, enjoyed the fruits of our sudden transplanting to this beautiful, isolated place. In summer I loved the delicious feel of the icy water in the spring-fed lake. My sister Martha and I would finish our household chores feverishly so we could swim when Daddy got home from the office.

We took turns riding horseback up to Crystal Spring through thick with laurel and rhododendron. Sometimes we would ride to the peaks of Jump-Off, where wave on wave of blue mountains shaded into purple shadows in the distance. At sunrise or sun-

set, flaming overspills of orange and rose and gold painted the sky. Such forays provided a satisfying aloneness for me—a time for asking questions, for thinking my own thoughts, for finding God.

In winter, wrapped in many layers of woolen clothes, we played in the snow beneath ice-laden pines. Sometimes we were snowed-in. I would read or dream on those days, enjoying the smell of pine-cones burning in the fireplace.

My world was isolated, though, and I grew up with mixed feelings about the green and rocky mountains that surrounded me. Growing into adulthood, I was sometimes overwhelmed by my questions and fear of failure. In those periods of self-doubt the mountains crushed me with their immensity, boxing me in. Their strength and beauty threatened me, made me feel small. I was sure I was the only one in the universe to feel insurmountably helpless and lonely.

At other times, however, the mountains beckoned me to climb them, to taste the flavor of them, to listen carefully to them. They gave me eyes to see things I had never seen before; and with each discovery I began to sense the mystery that is God's creation.

However lonely I may have felt, my isolation did not compare with that of the mountain kids. Most of them attended the small one-room Mt. Hebron School only when farm work was slack, a few months each year, and worshiped at Jones Gap Baptist Church across the road from the school. Occasionally I would see them at the Farmers' Curb Market, established when I was fourteen. But I was too shy to speak.

Mama liked the Curb Market. She would stand for hours and talk with the women about the beautiful handwork they sold, about gardening, about flowers. I went along to carry the packages and to listen. To my eyes the women and men looked gaunt and weather-beaten, but strong. Often their children would be there. They were as shy as I was.

Mr Nelson was not shy. Almost every Saturday, no matter the weather, he walked the six miles between our house and his. carrying a large basket, hand-woven from split oak and hickory bark. The basket was filled with fresh butter and eggs or with

in-season vegetables and fruit. He sold what we did not buy to other customers on the way into town (two more miles) or bartered at Drake's Store for staples not produced on the mountain. From there he walked the eight miles back up the mountain, his back and his basket loaded with provisions for his family.

Mr Nelson was thin and wiry with long white hair and beard, darting blue eyes, and expressive hands that remained unusually still as he talked. Talk he did. We listened raptly, sitting around the table on our screened-in back porch when the weather was good.

When Mr Nelson heard I was studying the violin, he brought down, in his basket, a fiddle he had carved himself. "Didn't bring the bow," he said. "Not hardly room. But you can see how smooth the fiddle is—look at the wood grain here. Only tools I used was a pocket knife and a piece of broken glass."

That fiddle was amazing—the back was shaped from a solid piece of satiny beechwood, and the sides and front were made of maple as smooth as crystal. The fingerboard was perfectly carved from dark walnut. The strings were made of copper, adding color that blended pleasantly with the gold tones of the instrument. But I dreaded to think what copper strings would do to the musical tone.

I volunteered my bow, and Mr Nelson played "Come, Angel Van." I marvelled at the near-mellowness of the tone. I marvelled also at his slouching fiddle posture. Instead of using the firmly erect, head-high position I had been taught, he put the instrument next to his cheek, and let it find its own resting place, flowing into his perfectly relaxed body. His relaxation looked absolutely right to me. Strangely so.

"Do you play in church?" my sister Clara asked.

"Oh, no. No fiddles allowed in church. Not fittin'."

"For square dances?"

"No! We play hymns in the evenin' if we got time to sit around and sing."

A few years later, my fiance was visiting us when Mr Nelson came by. When he learned that Bob was a ministerial student, he said:

"You're a preacher? Well, I want to ask you somethin'. A young, educated preacher was at our church last month. Got everybody upset. He said the earth is round, not flat at all like it says in the Bible. 'Four corners of the earth' makes it plain enough, don't you think?"

Courteous as always, Mr Nelson listened to Bob explain why 'four corners of the earth' does not necessarily mean the earth is flat. But the strong man from up the mountain kept his mind made up. We both loved him.

Then there was the red-haired boy from Jump-Off who walked seven miles to town every day and back again to attend high school. He and my sister Eleanor graduated together. Before that, they were partners on the debating team.

"We can almost read each other's minds. We have no trouble keeping together in our arguments and rebuttals," she insisted.

She told me once how she liked the proud way he held his head. She talked about his broad shoulders and the weathered, freckled skin on his homely face. She spoke of the will that made him choose to seek answers to his questions outside the mountain tradition.

The red-haired boy that Eleanor liked went off to college and on to seminary. Now I wonder—how much did he take with him of the strength and vital energy of his mountain world? Were both sunrise and sunset always on the fringes of his senses, giving him inner strength to break out into the unknown with all the possibilities that both repelled and challenged him? He returned to preach in his own country.

I hold memories of other mountain people, of course; but none are so vivid as those of Mr Nelson and the red-haired boy. Each responded in his own way to the mountains' claim on his life. Each asked his questions and found his fulfillment.

On my way down the mountain, the sunlight shone brighter for me than ever. I recalled the heritage of strength that is mine from the mountains, from the mountain people, from my family, and from God.

I still ask questions. I still have days on which my self-doubts overwhelm me and my problems seem insurmountable.

But that day, with the sun shining above the mountains, I realized that I have no room for despair, no room at all. The presence of God fills the whole world with hope in the final answers and triumph—for myself and for every one of us within his creation.

EXODUS — GENESIS

Elinor O. Gray

Like a space spider
distant jet
spins white webbing
stitching. . . stitching. . .
till silver probe
pricks an opening
through sky blue fabric
and weaver disappears
leaving shirred ribbon
wavering toward
point of entry
where swirling vapor,
sun-struck,
turns to molten gold.

CONCERNING SPACE

Brunice C. Cole, Jr.

From the beginning
God's majestic creation
Evidenced His power.

THE HOLIDAY OF SUKKOS

Samuel M. Silver

SUKKOS (pronounced SOOK-us) is one of the ways the Jewish people have of saying thank-you to God. It is a holiday which comes in the autumn when nature is very pretty: with browns, reds, yellows, violets and purples on the trees and in the fields. Thousands of years ago the Jewish farmers created this holiday because they wanted to say thanks to the Lord for the beauty around them and because it was a time when they rested up a bit before getting to work gathering up the harvest.

In your Bible you can read about Sukkos in the Book of Leviticus, Chapter 23, the Book of Exodus, Chapter 23, and in the Book of Numbers, Chapter 29.

Sukkos is a Hebrew word which means "tents" or "huts." The holiday is connected with the time when the Jews inhabited the desert. For forty years they lived in tents as they traveled to the land of freedom, and during all that time the Lord protected them. So they declared a holiday, which they called Sukkos, huts, sometimes known as tabernacles.

Sukkos stands for so many things that it is celebrated for an entire week or eight days by more traditional Jews. An extra day has been added, too. It is called Simchas Torah, "the Joy of Learning," and on that day the first chapters of the Book of Moses are read to show that one must never stop learning to do the right thing.

On Sukkos it is the custom to build a hut outside one's home or in or near the synagogue to remind one that the ancient Jews actually lived in such structures. The hut, or sukkah, is open at the top so that one can see the sky, and it is decorated with the fruits and foliage of autumn. The hut also reminds one that many people do not have decent houses to live in. Sukkos is, therefore, a time when people are urged to make gifts to the poor and to help find ways of putting an end to poverty.

Our Thanksgiving Day was modeled after Sukkos by the

Pilgrims, who loved the Bible. The Pilgrims felt they were like the Jews of olden times because they also left a land of bondage and wandered over unknown territory to a land of promise. They were going to make Thanksgiving a Sunday. But they wanted to separate it from their Sabbath. Saturday, they remembered, was the Jewish Sabbath. And Friday was the Mohammedan Sabbath. So they chose Thursday, a day when people of all faiths could enjoy an extra celebration of gratitude and thanks for their many blessings.

THE CROOKED STEMMED ASTER

Eleanor Ebersole

"COULDN'T you make up your mind?" asked the small maple seedling which was not much taller than the pale purple aster it was talking to.

"No," said the crooked stemmed aster...."Well, yes, actually. About what?"

"Where you were going," said the seedling.

"Of course," replied the aster...."What do you mean, about going?"

"You zigzagged," said the small maple.

"I did!" said the aster in astonishment, then it hesitated, and added, "Did I? What do you think?"

"I think you zigzagged."

"Why should I do that? Though if you say so, I did. Actually, however, I don't think I did."

"Look here," said the young maple. "I am straight. I might bend a bit toward the light, but when I got going, I went."

"I see," said the crooked stemmed aster. "Whatever you say, but I think...."

"I don't think you think at all," said the maple. "I think you grow one leaf, then change your mind before you grow another."

"I do! Doesn't everyone?" asked the aster. "Actually,

I don't think that is what I did. Well, anyway, my leaves are better."

"No, they are not," said the maple emphatically. "See mine. They are proportioned. But you, you start out thin and then grow wider, then you go jagged to add to the mess. There couldn't be any other leaves like yours."

"If you say so," said the crooked stemmed aster. Then it said no more. "I was losing an argument I didn't even start. . . . I don't think," thought the aster to itself.

"Now you've got it," said the maple after a time.

"Got what?"

"Got it straight."

"I do!" exclaimed the aster, greatly surprised. "What?"

"Your petals. They're straight."

"Do you think so?" said the aster. "Is it good?"

"Of course," said the maple. "Everything ought to be straight."

The aster stopped talking altogether. Things seemed better that way, since at last it had something without a zigzag mistake. It really didn't think its sideways petals had anything to do with stopping for breath between leaves, in making up its mind.

NEW BIRTH

Elizabeth Magnuson

White smoke rising from charcoal earth.
Slowly, silently tussocks form,
Etching themselves against ebon spikes...
Black skeletons of trees so lately lush.

Yet verdant will this ravaged wood again become.
So -- faith dispels the mists of woe,
And anguish, that lays waste a heart, is done.
Oh, the rapture when His love renews my life!

GOLDEN AUTUMN

Ann D. Franklin

AUTUMN is the golden season. Quietly, and before we are fully aware, she transforms the familiar shades of summer greens to hues of red, orange, brown and gold. On a given morning, our landscape becomes a panoramic vision of glowing color.

Autumn's air contains a nippiness, invigorating to a body that has been slowed down by the languidness of summer. Footsteps become livelier, moving with a buoyancy that is in tune with the season.

It awakens one's sense of smell. For who can resist breathing in deeply the luscious scent of apples or the poignant odor of wood-burning fires?

It is alive with the sounds of nature—birds chirping in preparation for their flight to warmer climes, leaves rustling when breezes flow, as if trying to draw our attention to their change of dress.

It is alive with human sounds—spirited football games, end-of-season picnics, backyard barbecues, the squealing of children as they romp through fallen leaves.

Autumn boasts of two special days. Halloween, a day long awaited by the children, when pumpkins dot doorsteps and costumes dazzle adults as they hand out treats to little ones who have flocked to the door.

And Thanksgiving, that most precious day when families gather around the table to partake of a turkey dinner—the day when thoughts turn to the many blessings that make up our lives.

In summation, autumn can be looked upon as a golden picture painted by a majestic hand. She is nature's final gift of beauty before settling down for her long winter's sleep. And we—during the barren bleak days—will retrieve the picture from our minds, experiencing a warmth from her golden splendor.

* *

THE WORLD OF GOD

Cornelia Bagarotti

THE WORLD OF GOD and the world of man—are they one and the same? Or, if they aren't, in what lies the difference?

The world of man is created and penetrated throughout by the world of God. But "man has eyes and he sees not," "he has ears and he hears not." All too often he sees only the external hull, the tangible and the visible.

Spirit is invisible. Matter is visible. When destiny strikes, and man is face to face with his personal zero-point, this is his great moment of testing and spiritual opportunity. When he can no longer overcome by the force of his own will or desire or cleverness, then God waits gently for him to open the door to His world.

That first heartfelt prayer of utter faith, that complete surrender to an unseen power higher than himself or the outer world, that absolute acceptance of what has befallen him, is the opening of the door into God's world.

"Many are called but few are chosen."

How is man to know that this new world is as real as the one believed in before? "By their fruits ye shall know them."

The fruits of the spirit are peace, love for all, joy, brotherhood, serenity, and absolute faith. All forms of life—all in the external world, all whom we meet, all we do—take on a joyous radiance and delight which, like the miraculous inflow of Christian spirit, floods the world with a new dimension.

God's world and man's world become one...when man sets aside his selfish, unloving egoism. The empty cup can be filled ...then God flows into him. The prayer of surrender empties man. Ask and ye *shall* receive. Seek and ye *shall* find. "Whosoever believeth in me has seen the Father." "The Father and I are one." "And I shall send ye the Holy Comforter."

The greatest adventure, the greatest worth of any man's life is the return to God.

"For what does it profit a man if he gain the whole world

and lose his soul?"

Do not pity a man for his testing and suffering nor for his death. Pity him only if despite the opportunities life has presented him he failed to find the world of God.

BEHIND THE DOOR

Mary Hassler

OUTSIDE MY BEDROOM WINDOW there's a door. A back door. Pink ruffled curtains grace its window. A family of three, husband, wife, and child, go in and come out.

At this very moment the husband in brown coveralls comes out the back door on his way to work. As he walks down the steps he smiles as if to greet the bright new morning.

Soon the child will come out, one arm cradled with books, her blond ponytail bobbing. She will greet her friends, and they will laugh and giggle at something as they start up the street on their way to school.

Later, both husband and child will return and go back in the door.

The wife, an attractive dark-haired woman, comes out the back door several times during the day. She shakes a mop, hangs wash on the clothesline, fetches mail. When she nears my window, I sometimes rap on the pane. We smile and wave. Afterwards, she goes back in the door.

I know that life goes on inside that back door. But beyond what comes out or goes in, I know little.

Same with the door marked life. People go in and people come out. Some bring joy, some sorrow. I can't see too well behind the door. I have only the smallest inkling of what's inside.

I can just hope that more joy than sorrow lies behind these doors—both that back door and the one marked life.

HENRY J. GERNHARDT, SR.

(1891 – 1977)

WE ARE SORRY to report the death—last July—of Reverend Henry J. Gernhardt, Sr., in Twin Falls, Idaho. He was eighty-six. A Methodist, Reverend Gernhardt had been a member of Fellowship in Prayer since 1961. He served as Advisor from the Western Zone and contributed frequently as a writer. In recent years he had been active in working with senior citizens to form prayer-groups.

ONE AND TWENTY

(A Prayer of the Young for the Old)

Ronnie Lappe

HELP! Help!—I am one-and-twenty. No use to talk to me!

Lord, help me to understand the old, not compassion and pity, but love and care. Help me to remember their physical deficiencies, and let me make use of my youth to make up for them: to help arthritic legs across a street or a slippery way, to help gnarled hands pick up what they cannot pick up by themselves, to make feebleness sturdy by sharing my strength.

Lord, help me to be more patient and to realize that I must speak distinctly, not minding having to repeat things which were not heard: it would not have been asked for, had it not been wanted. Help me to listen patiently to stories I have heard before. Let me listen respectfully with new enthusiasm, realizing the story would not be told to me if it were not thought to possess something worth sharing, something helpful to me.

Lord, help me to correct their mistakes tactfully and kindly if they must be corrected. Let me never forget kindness, tenderness, and love.

Help me to realize that if I find their ideas out-of-date, they were shared for my good. Let me accept this help with relish. Help me to realize that these ideas are those with which and by which they have lived so long that they seem like rules rather than ideas. Please let me not break their rules if they are important to them. If they seem irrelevant to me, help me to leave them behind kindly but not harshly so as not to hurt them.

Let me, oh Lord, help them to adjust to the losses due to time—losses in the body, in walking, in hearing, and losses of the mind. If the present is muddled and the past is remembered, let me help them live as best they can.

Above all, Lord, let me understand and respect the old, help me make them feel loved, wanted and cared for.

NOTICES AND COMMENT

TREASURER. Joseph Porcelli, of Mercerville, New Jersey, was elected Treasurer of Fellowship in Prayer at the meeting of the Board of Trustees held last June. Mr Porcelli is currently working as a corporation analyst in the New York office of Revlon. A Roman Catholic and a graduate of Saint Joseph's College, he is married and the proud father of Joseph, Jr., aged one.

NEW MASTHEAD. If you turn the page, you will see changes in our masthead reflecting the changes in personnel announced in the first pages of this issue.

WHAT IS YOUR ADDRESS? A letter from President Reuben L. Musey, announcing the retirement of Miss Brown as Executive Secretary and the appointment of Mr Maurer, was mailed last month to all members of Fellowship in Prayer. Such a large number of these letters, which were sent first-class, were returned stamped "Address Unknown," that we beg you please to keep us informed of your current address. If you have already moved without letting us know your new address, we will appreciate your supplying it to us as soon as possible.

****

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LIFE PLAYING ANOTHER CHORD

Sister Mary Rega Haschke

A calmness in the atmosphere
When October's feat is scored
Sets wild creatures scurrying
Getting the season's rations stored.

Relaxed tempo this time of year
Prompts folks, gath'ring in accord,
Cease anxious hurrying —
Stop unChristianlike to hoard.

Cloudless autumn skies, azure clear,
Natural ozone afford;
Effecting change, —mellowing—
In earth's chemical realms explored.

Perfect setting for attending
Life strumming a newfound chord —
Our human chastening
Before our bounteous Lord.

IF

Dorothy Corbett Gentleman

If time should stop and death and birth
Today should cease to be;
If old and young upon the earth
Were told that they were free
To choose an age in which to live
For all Eternity,
If you were asked, what would you give
As answer, truthfully?

Would you be young and lack the cold
Responsibility?
Would you be lover, gay and gold,
And sing and dance with glee?
Or would'st be aged, wise, but slow
And live in memory?
I'd have to think, to live, to know
What answer mine would be.